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This Poor Distressed World

ANYONE who follows carefully the news from Europe could not be surprised at the announcement that the Pope's physician had ordered him to conserve his strength by substantially cutting down on the amount of business he transacts. For no man in public position has given evidence of anything like the Sovereign Pontiff's deep, tender solicitude for the awful evils the world is suffering from force and the application of force. His own suffering in the face of suffering is manifest before the world; he constantly reiterates one hope — for peace; it seems as though he wished it at almost any price, realizing the greater danger that may lie in a finish fight than in almost any sort of compromise, where there are no ungenerous victors, no bitterly defeated. Perhaps that is reading things into the Pope's mind. Yet how else interpret his words to the new Italian Ambassador, Dino Alfieri: ". . . valiant, strong, laborious Italian people the wisdom of whose rulers and whose own inner impulse has thus far happily preserved them from being involved in the war"? Or his prayer in the Borghesiana Chapel, where forty years ago he said his first Mass: "that the Blessed Lord through the intercession of the glorious Queen of Peace return peace and good-will to this poor distressed world"? The governors of peoples, he said to the new Haitian Minister, must renounce the "cult of force employed against right" and accept the "supreme authority of the Creator." And his sad recognition of the "painful situation" of those priests "who have been suddenly torn from your spiritual ministries or peaceful studies and led into a military atmosphere," an allusion presumably to the situation in France where the clergy of proper age has been largely mobilized in the armed forces, not as chaplains but as "plain soldiers." All these utterances follow upon a long series of similar sentiments. No man could be more doggedly, continuously working and praying and suffering for peace than Pius XII.

Urbi et Orbi

Finland and the League

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS had just been retold by Russia, when this was written, that "the Soviet Union maintains peaceful relations with the democratic republic of Finland"—and the deadly attack against Finland was still going on. It appeared that Russia was simply going to go on sacrificing men and materials from her relatively inexhaustible quantities until Finland should be crushed. The League does not furnish a tight enough and strong enough union to protect neutrals. Never taken in any way but cynically by Russia, sabotaged as a world-wide organization by US and Japan, and as a European structure directly wrecked by Italy and Germany, and indirectly by the victors of Versailles in putting it to improper use, the League is valuable now almost exclusively as a historical lesson. Neutrals cannot on the one hand fit their policies to the threats of powerful neighbors which involve tearing down international or supernational organization, and on the other hand expect protection from the international organization. Small states must either become victim parts of great empires, or they must create a federation in which they may exist as relatively but not sovereignly free members. There is a threat to great neutral powers as well as to small ones: not, perhaps, of annihilation in quick war, but of the contraction of world intercourse, the still more complete triumph of force over morality and law, the exhaustion of creative cultural and economic life, and unhappiness and despair. If the League proves impotent now, as it almost surely will, the neutrals must not go home and quake with fear by themselves. They had better join together in another meeting and form a union that can come at least a little closer to protecting western civilization from tragedies like those of Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Austria; World Wars I and II.

Neutrals Fall Together

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Employment and Wages and Hours

THE ECONOMIC TROUBLES of the country are shown most clearly by two symptoms: In September, 1939, there were 8,196,000 unemployed, about 15 percent of the total available labor force of 54,538,000. During the years 1935-36 the median American family had an income of $1,160. The lowest economic one-third of our families had incomes below $780, with an average of $471.

A Law of Limited Use

The Wages and Hours Law attacks at once both unemployment and low family income. This year the standards it calls for are a wage minimum of 30 cents an hour, and a maximum work week of 42 hours. As written, the law now applies to only 12,300,000 employees, less than a quarter of the total labor force. Many of the present exemptions seem needless and arbitrary, but the fact remains that such a centralized and general law is suited by far the best to big industry with nationwide, standardized processes and with conditions and prices and costs not altogether dependent upon free and unchecked competition.

The new administrator of the law, Colonel Fleming, is wisely trying to decentralize and pep up enforcement. Furthermore, the "escalator plan" written in the law provides for some flexibility. "Industry committees" may work out as high wages and as short hours as the different industries consider possible. The textile and hosiery industries have already adopted standards better than the general legal minimum. Such flexibility and industrial organization is valuable.

But the Wages and Hours Law has a self-stopper—a limit of efficiency stated vaguely in the text of the law itself: Industry committees are supposed to seek "the highest minimum wage rates . . . which . . . will not substantially curtail employment in the industry."

You are bound to drive out firms which are just getting by if you raise their costs. The country has the hard duty of observing the actual relationship between human minimums and business bankruptcy as the Board progresses in its work, and then of devising and putting into effect reorganization necessary to bring together tolerable human standards and effective business systems.

Ending Poverty in California

THERE IS NO END to the facts and figures that show the inability of American business to distribute to the people the goods it is capable of producing. New Deal relief was introduced as a highly necessary relief measure. It is still necessary, although American industrial production is at an all-time peak. Some form of "production for use" is one alternative to this unhappy state of affairs. It is fitting that California should try out a large-scale experiment of this type. For Upton Sinclair, who now seeks a subsidy to place well-bound sets of his books in 10,000 libraries, waged his electoral campaigns there on the issue of a very similar EPIC plan. What is starting in Los Angeles, December 18, might eventually absorb 700,000 unemployed in the state. The first distributing center is a food market with sidelines of work clothes, hosiery and towels. Half of the merchandise comes from 38 southern California producing cooperatives, the other half from ordinary business. Goods are sold at market prices to members only, with the patronage dividends of regular consumer cooperatives. Those removed from relief rolls to take part in the scheme have a variety of occupations open, for so far the producing co-ops include 4 bakeries, 5 canneries, 11 farms, 1 furniture plant, 1 goat herd, 3 hog ranches and 9 sewing groups. Wages are $30 per month in cash plus $10 a month in credit at the store. If it works the new plan will materially cut state relief costs; at the same time it will to a degree that must be determined compete with private business. The need of better distributing the goods of the earth and building up morale justifies such an experiment.

Production for Use

What a Metropolis Cannot Do

A RECENT EPIGRAM calls New York "man's most magnificent mistake." This refers presumably to the architectural folly of the modern-built metropolis, which houses millions of workers in hives piled vertically to the heavens, but has not room in its streets for them, or the vehicles which convey them to and fro. This is an indictment which must be admitted. A city of skyscrapers is a mistake from every point of view except that of the beholder a safe distance away from its streets. But the modern metropolis, of which New York is the prime example, is often thoughtlessly blamed for something else, which actually no amount of forethought and wise planning could have obviated. Such a city, being an irresistible focus of industry, business, art and entertainment, pulls people to it by the millions, and they come at their own convenience, not the city's. And the greatest source of these additional crowds is the suburbs which make a wide periphery about the city—at convenient striking distance, in other words, and capable of unleashing cars and human beings without number upon the city's streets, shops and theatres whenever it seems good to them to come. This reflection recurs every time the city authorities engage in another desperate campaign to control its uncontrollable traffic. At the present moment, for instance, it is planned to take the great fleet of interstate buses off the chief thoroughfares, and to confine the taking on and

Inherent Problem

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discharge of passengers to terminals near bridges and tunnels. This is a sensible scheme—on paper. Doubtless it will produce temporary relief. But presently word will go around through the periphery that the streets of New York are less crowded; and cars innumerable which have been awaiting this chance will shoot in from suburbs at every point of the compass, filling twice over the spaces which have been cleared. This is the inherent problem of a modern metropolis.

The Perfidy of Getting Your Money's Worth

THE DIES COMMITTEE has made few more startling moves than the publication of a list of 14 consumers' organizations which, it alleges, are serving as "transmission belts" to the Revolution. To begin with, it is important to note that none of the 14 are affiliated with the Cooperative League of the U.S.A. or the chief farmers' marketing organizations. It is not surprising that communists should seek influence in a movement whose importance has been growing so rapidly in recent years. Without going into the extent to which Mr. Matthews's charges on this score are true in specific instances, we venture to suggest that if these organizations are gaining in influence, it is up to all of us to take so active a part that no such domination as alleged is possible. There is the same problem with labor unions and consumer cooperatives, the best of instruments for attaining social justice, for particularly in the former case they can be used to foment civil strife. But can Mr. Matthews seriously believe that the check on misleading advertising exercised by an organization such as the Consumers' Union will thereby "undermine and help destroy the capitalist system of free enterprise"? Without commenting on this glowing reference to big business, we might add that the average consumers' report, by insisting on full value, encourages big advertisers toward the soundest basis for doing business. Since when has the discontent of well-fed housewives led to the barricades?

Red Housewives

Balm from the Magistrate's Bench

THIS IS by no means the first time that the eminent New York City magistrate, Henry Curran, has given a token that all color and individuality has not yet been squeezed out of public affairs; but this paragraph must be brief. Briefly, then, a husband and wife appeared before him to complain that a construction company working day-and-night shifts near their apartment made it impossible for them to sleep. The magistrate found that the peculiar necessities of the construction job made this perpetual labor essential. But he did not thereupon merely dismiss the complainants. With a touch of impulsive sympathy which, whatever else it may have been (and it was called other things by certain other city officials) was imaginative and human, he ordered the couple to buy the best dinner the town could provide, sleep the night at a good hotel, and present the bill for these festive panaceas to abraded nerves in his court the following day. His orders were followed—to the tune of $65.32. The magistrate, checking the bill, deprecated the $.32, but otherwise seemed well satisfied, quoted Horace, and undertook that the bill should be paid. After a slight interval, he paid it himself. Puritanical voices here and there have caviled. There are those who point out that many others complained of the same noises, without eliciting the same judicial tenderness. But we say bosh. We believe that the whole thing gave the same vicarious satisfaction as any magic-wand, something-for-nothing happening does. And it also gave more substantial satisfaction in some quarters; as the magistrate, honorably balancing indulgence with charity, sent a like amount to the Salvation Army for Christmas dinners.

Judicial Episode

Platform of American Industry

ONE DOES not know how to take the recently promulgated platform of the National Association of Manufacturers. It is one of those things that can be taken as meaning just what it says—or as requiring an even sharper student of words than Stuart Chase for its exegesis. It is, of course, a long platform, and many of its planks, particularly those that relate to the problems of management, deserve close study and sympathetic response. Yet it repeats certain rather old ideas, which may be just enough, but the meaning of which is difficult to fathom. How is government to balance the budget? One suspects that if the NAM itself were given the job of doing that, its solution would not be a balanced budget, but a different series of excuses for an unbalanced budget. Or take this: "The employee should have the right to join any labor organization he wishes, or none at all, as he may himself deem best in his own interests. The action he takes in this regard should be arrived at as a matter of his own free will and volition, without coercion, duress or intimidation from any source." That sounds simply fine, but what is "duress" or "intimidation" or "coercion"? Would the activities of a CIO organizer come under these heads? How about the subtle persuasion which an employer can quietly use in promoting a company union? Is that "duress"? The sentences quoted might be taken to mean that a great variety of unions would be a good idea. Yet the testimony before the Congressional Committee investigating the NLRB proves how much harder have been the problems faced by the Board because it has had to deal with CIO-AFL antagonism.

A Case of Words

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The New Birth

The symbols, the words and the meaning of Christmas, then and now.

By **Richard Flower, O.S.B.**

THE CURSE upon the human race periodically bursts out into tangible expression. This is but a constant reminder to us that somewhere in the origin of history all was not well. Mankind labors under a burden already ancient. *Vestustas* (the old sin) sounds like a raucous note through the entire symphony of life and also through the whole range of the liturgy. There is nothing so cheering, on the contrary, as the counterpoint of *novitas* (newness), which descants upon the tragic elements of our history and weaves them into passages of exultant joy and undying beauty. The liturgy of Christmas dramatically portrays this *novitas*.

That the liturgy of this season should be suffused with light one would expect. The texts of Breviary and Missal scintillate with light symbols. That December 25 was originally the pagan feast day of Sol Invictus may have led the Roman Church to substitute for it the Nativity of Christ the Sun of Justice, coincident with the winter solstice; although hitherto, both in the East and in the West, the Nativity was celebrated on January 6. At first sight, moreover, the saying of three Christmas Masses in the West would seem to follow the division of the day into light periods: Dark, Dawn, Day. This is only a later mystical explanation, however, for the Three Masses of Christmas derive from a practice peculiar to Rome of honoring the Stable, the Roman Martyr of the day, and the Nativity as the chief event of the day. Only the Pontiff said three Masses, going vested from the Mass at St. Mary Major's, by way of the Church of St. Anastasia, to St. Peter's. The Middle Ages gave to this ancient rite mystical and ascetic interpretations, and to these we doubtless do well to adhere fairly closely, according to the mind of the Church.

Light symbolism and the new birth

Behind the light symbolism of the Christmas liturgy is a more basic idea, that of New Birth. The new light illustrates a *nova nativitas*. Every birth is new; the addition of the epithet to Christ's birth must imply a special quality in this historic occurrence. What that quality is appears in strong relief in the Postcommunion of the Dawn Mass: "May the new birth of this sacrament ever restore us, O Lord, whose wonderful birth destroyed the old man." Here is the newness characteristic of Christ's birth. It has to be understood in its contrast to the oldness of man. The divine-human reality of Christ sinks down, as it were, into the plane of time and space; God enters tangibly into history; the newness of the Nativity confronts the oldness of man; Redemption informs this deformed creation; the new man restores the old; the new birth shall deliver those "who are held fast in the old bondage under the yoke of sin" (Collect for the Day).

It is most inspiring to see the whole of creation —from Adam to the newest infant, from "China to Peru," from agate to angel—as one organic whole.

The lowest is thus integrated and summed up in the highest. In such a view the birth of Christ is but the insertion of Divine life into this cosmic organic process. Nothing so aptly illustrates this insertion as light suffusing darkness or as fire warming the metal sphere which it indwells. What results is a transformation: the darkness is made into light and the ball is made to glow. So the New Birth of Christ transforms our whole cosmic process and mankind glows with a new warmth in all his faculties, mind, heart, body and soul. Such a renovation in the total organic reality of mankind is nothing less than a regeneration. It is the gift of new life and the exchange of human life for the divine. Here begins a new *commercium* between God and creatures—"O wondrous interchange! The Creator of mankind, taking upon Him a living body, vouchsafed to be born of a Virgin: and proceeding forth as Man, without seed, hath made us partakers of His Divinity" (Antiphon from Vespers of the Circumcision). The whole Christmas Liturgy echoes and re-echoes this amazing *consortium*, "this sacred intercourse" (Secret of the Night Mass) whereby the Church prays to "be found like unto Him in whom man's substance is united with God." Nor is the emphasis on the individual's union with God; the New Birth is so objective as historical fact and so dynamic in its organic effect that it is of profound social import. Transformation, restoration, regeneration are cosmic, social results of the New Birth; the whole human organism of society is affected. A universal Savior has appeared "that He might cleanse to Himself *a people* acceptable"

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(Epistle of Night Mass). He is a cosmic as well as an individual Savior, and those who would forget this fail to explain the tremendous words of the Postcommunion of the Day Mass — that "the author of divine generation to us" (as individuals) is also the *Salvator Mundi.*

Men's hearts fail them

When, as at present, the earthly scene dims into a blackout of fear and despair, the skies rent by screeching of planes and bombs, men's hearts failing them for fear of what is coming upon the earth, it is the happy fact of the New Birth which should properly stay our excitement and dismiss our fears. The cosmic regeneration is undeniably wrought, deep within the heart of creation. Nothing that man has written or sung, acted, painted, or chiselled does justice to this idea of universal Redemption as does the liturgy of Catholicism. Year succeeds year, and the divine-human actuality appears anew in the plane of our conscious life. "Redemption draweth nigh."

Fully to realize the liturgy, and hence the liturgy of Christmas, one must have been sometime within its beneficent effulgence and consciously have become a part of it. In other, non-liturgical forms of piety no such essential identification of ego and object is necessary: it suffices merely to behold them from without, to accept them as an outsider, and by a sort of mechanical action of the will to rule one's behavior and life in respect to them. Such an attitude, resting on single and repeated acts of the will, is far from the organic point of view of the liturgical Christian. In him the *novitas* of redemption works as a leaven; it has possessed him as the stream possesses the swimmer, only more organically. He has become a living organ moving with the new life of the divine-human organism, sensitive to God and to creatures. His acts and his thinking flow from his redeemed organic being, and his attitude to the Divine is one of thanks and praise. To him the liturgy is the natural tongue of his articulation. He is with and of and in it, for it is instinct with the same new life which throbs in his own being.

It is patent that the texts of the Missal and the Breviary are a growth from the organic life of a divine-human society. The oldness of humanity is there suffused with the newness of the divine; darkness is made light, the ancient curse confuted by blessing. From the initial words of Christmas Vespers, "the King of peace is highly exalted, for whose countenance all the earth longeth," through the Hours of night and day, and even throughout the Octave and through Epiphany and the weeks up to Septuagesima the chief refrain is Redemption, *novitas natalis*: "May this offering, O God, we beseech Thee, cleanse, renew, govern, and protect us" (Secret of the Mass for the Sixth Sunday after Epiphany).

It is something to know and love the texts of the liturgy. It is a great thing to participate in the rendering of those texts as a worshipper. Greater still is the experience of letting voice and gesture express the inner joy, sorrow, shame, wonder, fear, love—the basic emotions—pointed towards God and surging up to Him in the social worship of His organic mystical society. Anyone who has spent Christmas in a Benedictine Abbey knows with what an overwhelming *élan* he felt himself carried by the material accoutrements of the liturgy (music, rites, texts) through the degrees of feeling and intellect, into the heart of the Redemptive Action of the Mass and the Communion. He was not carried thither alone, but with the Church in that place he was borne, like the swimmer in the stream, into the Divine Actuality. He was organic with the Redemptive rhythm. Thanks, praise, love went out from him as naturally as incense from censer or song from lips, and goodwill and peace overflowed towards those about him, his brethren.

The Christmas liturgy itself

The Christmas liturgy would seem to have been the unique work of a spirit-filled society. It opens gates into a heavenly *aula* and summons earth to the ineffable mystery. "Christ is born unto us, come! let us adore" is the matutinal invitation. "As a bridegroom He cometh forth from His bridal-chamber" (Versicle and Response of I Nocturn). The intimate Godhead seems to disclose Himself; the counsel of the Divine Majesty is being shared with His creatures, and the haunting music of Isaias' prophecies floats down to console the old world of sin. St. Leo then discourses on the reason of God's advent—to reconcile nature to its author—and bespeaks our joy and gratitude. "Acknowledge, O Christian, thy dignity, and as thou hast been made partaker of the divine nature, never more return to the old wickedness by aught of sinful conservation." Then, what is so thrilling in this Christmas pageant, the Divine is interfused with the human: "The Angel saith to the shepherds, I announce unto you great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born in the city of David a Savior, Christ the Lord. Ye shall find him wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger." The sudden realization that Godhead consorts with mankind, angels with shepherds on the hills, the Divine with the human, only heightens the fervor of the redeemed. They take up the Scriptures to read four Homilies on the Gospels: Saints Jerome, Gregory, Ambrose and Augustine are the illustrious doctors to speak, having as Chorus the Baptist, our Lady, and the Fourth Evangelist. "The Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world . . . who today deigned for our salvation to be born of a Virgin . . . was in the beginning with God and was God." Then

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follows the solemn chanting of the Gospel (of the Day Mass) by the Prelate, the patriarch of the household (the Gospel of divine-human genealogy), then the solemn *Te Deum,* with the Collect finally gathering up the supplication of the united assemblage.

The Night Mass has an atmosphere of celestial glory about it; Schuster avers that it "commemorates the eternal birth of the Word of God amid the magnificence of His Father's glory." From the Office of Lauds which follows one gets a feeling that this supernal mystery is already in contact with this world. The first antiphon of Lauds, with its quaint wording and its quainter pastoral melody, blends the heavenly and the earthly into a strand of serene joyousness, ending in a twofold alleluia, thus: "Whom beheld ye, O shepherds? Tell us, declare to us the tidings; on earth who hath appeared?" Then the answer, like a pipe heard over the world: "We saw the new-born Infant, and the choir of Angels, praising the Lord together, alleluia, alleluia." The Office continues this blending of the Divine and the human, and gives voice to the ineffable mystery of the New Birth—"unto us this day a Child is born, a Son is given"—whereby those "who are held fast in the old bondage" shall be delivered. Thereupon a new motif enters:

> She that travailed hath borne the Monarch,
> the Son of Mary, Christ the King.

Social worship of the new world

Because it is the birth of the Divine Son it is by equal title that He shall be called the world's Redeemer, the King of peace; nevertheless, His appearing in the garb of humility marks Him as our dear Brother. It is the Dawn Mass which strikes particularly this note of *humanitas:* "The goodness and kindness of God our Savior hath appeared." And in the Collect the thought is enlarged upon: "Grant that we who are filled with the new light of Thy incarnate Word, may show forth in our works what shines in our mind by faith." Precisely as the Redeemed form one organic body with the Redeemer, His mystical Body extended through time and space, so the qualities of His mercy will actuate that Body. The Church at Mass makes its corporate affirmation of the King of Love and does so by opening heart and lips to praise Him, as naturally and organically as heart throbs or lungs breathe in the human body. Such a response from the Church at worship is a social thing, for it implies an organic charity for the members of the Body and for all God's creatures. *Rex mundi* embraces all men, and the divine-human organism operates fully only when this is realized. The full operation in us of the redemptive act of the New Birth comes about when Christians let the newness of Christ have full way with them. The liturgy furnishes precisely the milieu for such a piety, for it is constantly confronting us with the glory of the Lord and, as in the Masses of Christmas, with His heavenly kingship, His humility, and, particularly in the Day Mass, His final coming in glory as judge. It is always the countenance of Christ, *Epiphania Domini est,* always the supernatural glories of the Lord and the incomprehensible mysterious beauty of His face. By the organic joining of our spirit with that new world the liturgy brings to birth in man that holy love and joy and that burning passion and unshakable will to serve God in all things. No intricate technique of the will, no measures of working out our own salvation, no pedagogical tricks with our own person count half so much as letting Christ be born in us and letting ourselves grow more and more in Him. So the newness of Christ's birth means death to the old man and the organic growth in us, stage by stage, of the New Man. From the liturgy of Saint James come words redolent of this idea: "From glory to glory advancing, we praise Thee, O Lord." As if in mankind, beholding the face of the Lord, were wrought out that *novitas natalis* and man by worship grew into His likeness.

The riches of the liturgical text—the Christmas texts are no exception—are like God's mercies "new every day." They express in words that abundant wealth which is Christ. Son of Justice, Prince of Peace, King of all Creation, Child of Mary, Good Shepherd, Light of Light, Day-Star from on high, Redeemer of Mankind, Salvator Mundi, Father of the world to come — such is Christ the Lord, in whom the Church has its Founder and Head, and who gives to His members that New Birth, making them sons of God. Face to face with a mystery so amazing one can but gaze in wonder. We have to thank the Spirit-filled Church for putting her words into our hearts and mouths, which had been otherwise dumb and empty. Thanks be to God for New Birth in His Son!

A Christmas Song

O little stars, shine out, shine out
  And little winds blow still,
And all you smallest angels rout
  High seraphs from the hill

That looks upon a little town
  And holds a secret sweet,
And little paths, run down, run down
  To beckon little feet.

For littleness shall rule tonight
  All gentle hearts and true;
For littleness is full of might,
  And God is little, too.

SISTER CHRYSOSTOM KOPPES, O.S.B.

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Just War

A French philosopher discusses the criteria for a just war as they apply to the present conflict.

By **Jacques Maritain**

WITH what power events, when they involve suffering and bloodshed, challenge the spirit. More than ever reason has a duty to see clearly. But in the fire of such events ideas are quickly put to the test.

Many people thought that under modern world conditions there could no longer be a just war; this idea seemed to them tenable in the abstract, yet it was false. Of course it is true that the criteria for a just war established by the theologians of the classic age need revision, for war itself has radically changed: the war of armies has become the war of peoples, and is something which more closely resembles a cosmic cataclysm than the "last recourse" (*ultima ratio*) of those theologians. Yet in this cosmic cataclysm human beings are engaged, and hence the rules governing what is just and what is unjust remain. Confronted with the joint action by which the two peoples of France and of England—in order to challenge the frightful passion of violence and pride which thrust out against Poland and in order to prevent the world's being enslaved to the lust for brutal domination by which Hitler's totalitarianism is obsessed—decided to go to war against Germany, what man of right judgment would not say in conscience: this war against Germany is a just war?

Here is no question of an ideological war. It is not to serve an Idea or a divinized abstract Principle that France and Great Britain are giving the blood of their children and jeopardizing their heritage of civilization. It is rather for the elementary realities in the absence of which human life ceases to be human. It is rather in order that countries old in the tradition of justice and honor —where man can still breathe freely, order his own person, his work and his feelings, bring up his sons like himself, not as chattels of the state—may protect their historic existence and even their reason for existing.

Nor is there here any question of a holy war. The people of this country have enough common sense, they know well enough what every war brings with it and after it, in misery and in poison and in the intensification of the most vile as well as the exaltation of the most noble in our earthly life, to guard themselves against enlisting the sanctity of the ineffable Name in the temporal war which they are fighting.

It is a question of a just war. Fighting for justice—suffering and dying so that a bestial barbarism may not rule over the earth—they know (at least those who have the light of faith know) that they may count upon the help of God. They do not say: our cause is divine, our cause is the cause of God, we are the soldiers of God. They say: our cause is human, it is the cause of that human community desired by God in the natural order and which is called our fatherland, and which, hating war, has been forced to resort to war against an iniquitous aggressor; and because our cause is just, God will have pity on us.

And yet if ever a war could seem bathed in the reflections of supernatural struggles, as though already assigned its place on this side of the "threshold of the Apocalypse," as Léon Bloy used to say, it is certainly this war which has just begun. The enemy with whom we are dealing holds high the banners of blasphemy and of pagan empire; the alliance of atheism with idolatrous racism has uncovered its true countenance. But if *it* acts in its true character of iniquity by swallowing and by absorbing the things of God into the things of Caesar, *we* act in our true character of justice by maintaining the distinction between them, even though the temporal cause which we defend is in closest relation to the sacred welfare of souls. For, precisely because the common good of the terestrial community is not the ultimate end of human beings, it is essential to this common good that it be oriented toward a higher end; but this supremely real reference remains indirect and transcendent, and the external goods with which it is concerned extend beyond that which properly comprises the temporal welfare and the just cause of our earthly fatherland. Let us understand, therefore, and respect, the wariness with which the people of France approach those religious values with which, whether they like it or not, their cause is associated in this war. This wariness, which is a sort of modesty, is also at the same time a kind of rationalist false modesty. Some day it will cease. France will call upon God with love. And in order to receive His grace and His mercy, she will never in pride claim Him for herself alone in order to take unto herself His power.

What I would now like to point out is that the question of the justice of a war—which relates to

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a specific act and a dispute between men—and the question of its distant origins—which relate to the endless concatenations and crisscrossings of many acts and a dispute between the human conscience and the Master of history—are two quite different questions. For one thing, we know that sin is the cause of all the evil that happens on earth and that all men are sinners; for another thing, we know that a man may defend a just cause against an unjust adversary. And these two things are both true at the same time.

That which makes a war either just or unjust is, in essence, the immediate purpose and motive which determined it. The war against German National Socialism has for its immediately determining purpose and motive to resist the aggression of which Poland has been the victim, and to resist unbridled imperialist greed: it is a just war.

The remote origins of every war—which, moreover, involve the interior life of each people just as much as the relations between peoples—consist in accumulated moral evil. They consist in egoism, forgetfulness of the commonweal, an inordinate love for material goods, hardness of heart, a refusal to recognize the very existence of others; they consist in stupidity or folly, the weakness or ambitious fury of those in power, and that scorn for justice and for love, that scorn for God which is the boast of a politics holding itself aloof from natural ethics and the law of the Gospels. They consist in the seven deadly sins which, having flourished for a certain length of time, at last bear their fruit, in accordance with the very laws of that nature which they try to spoil.

Certainly in all this there are unequal responsibilities; the infinite Spirit recognizes these and weighs them; they may be immensely different, one from the other. In the last analysis, one way or another, to one degree or another, and without permitting the man of blood who has unleashed war in any way to clear himself of his crime, nobody, when it comes to the remote origins of a war, is altogether innocent before God.

Germany wages an unjust—a manifestly, monstrously unjust—war; and to the extent that she has yielded to Hitler and given herself over to him, her part in the underlying causes and the remote origins of the war is enormous. Yet she is not alone in carrying the burden of the sins from which the war sprung. That her war should be unjust and criminal does not free the other peoples from the duty of making themselves humble before God. That the other peoples should have some share before God in the remote origins of the war in no way makes Germany innocent of the crime of the unjust war she is waging nor of the barbarous fashion in which she is waging it.

The hard lessons of the last war and of what came after must not be lost. The German people became auto-intoxicated by the idea that not only must it recognize—what was strict truth—that it had in 1914 undertaken an unjust war, but admit that it alone—like a damned soul—carried the whole burden of the sins from which that war arose. The mistake which made possible this fatal auto-intoxication will not be made again. Nor will we once more identify the German people—however great its moral complicity—with Hitler and his totalitarianism. The Fuehrer's fundamental fraud, his glory as Antichrist, is to believe and to wish to be the incarnate Word of his people. Down with this false glory, this lie! He is not the incarnate Word of his people; he is their vampire.

Sane politics requires the distinctions of which I speak; they have a major political importance. They are difficult for the human mind to accept. If one were not helped in his acceptance of them by a Christian conception of life, who could, in practice, admit them?—while at the same time detesting to the marrow of his bones the abominations of total war and the sacrifices to which a magnificent generation of youth and many human beings dearer to him than life are exposed. It is terribly manifest, how a sane and truly realistic politics needs, if it is to preserve its clear insight, that feeling, which Christianity gives, for common human misery and at the same time for moral realities and the requirements of justice.

Because they are waging a just war, the peoples who are fighting Germany must have an inflexible will, to make justice triumph. Because it is truly in their character as Christian peoples that Hitlerism hates them and that they are put to the test, they are themselves summoned to a fundamental purification and to a renewal of which we can scarcely imagine the magnitude.

Whoever observes their determination, quiet and without hatred; whoever ponders the heroism of Poland, sees these peoples going into a fiery furnace just as the Christian enters into the purifying night of the soul, where in the midst of great anguish insuperable hope is never disappointed.

Consecration

Five barley loaves, two little fishes—
My scanty store—
I lay upon the altar of my heart.
Would it were more!

Wilt Thou in wondrous condescension
These deign to touch
That meagerness may multiply
And mite be much?

O, Galilean, Hope of all who hunger,
Fill Thou my soul
That I may offer starving, stumbling children
A loaf that's whole.

SISTER MARY DENISE, R.S.M.

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County Agent

Head, heart, hands and health get a good start in the rural 4 Hs.

By Ross L. Holman

HOW CAN I keep my boys and girls from going to the devil? The 4-H Club is one way the farmer is answering that question. The entire problem sums up to the question of giving the youngster something constructive on which he (or she) can concentrate an interest. If it is something he really loves to do you won't find him hanging around disreputable roadhouses, bootleg joints or other such places.

Down in one county in the mid-South there was a ten year old boy we will call Billy Rue. His father owned about 300 acres of the most fertile land in that section. Billy was out hoeing in the garden one day when the county agent called. Usually when he came that way he was looking for Mr. Rue, Sr., to make some suggestions about controlling the boll weevil, or maybe to see how that fine field of crimson clover was developing. But this time he asked for Billy.

"How would you like to handle a 4-H cotton project?" he asked the youngster as the latter leaned on his hoe to hear what this representative of the state agricultural extension service had on his mind.

Billy's eyes brightened. Other boys, under the supervision of the county agent, had been joining various community 4-H Clubs taking up projects involving the production of poultry, cotton, corn, sheep, hogs, etc., and through them he had already learned enough about this class of work to make it unnecessary for the C.A. to do much explaining. Billy had been wondering when, if ever, this official would get around to see him.

"I think it would be fun," Billy answered.

After talking it over with Billy's father the C.A. arranged for the boy to plant an even acre of cotton down back of the orchard. He himself would supervise the work along with that of the other boys handling similar projects. Billy was to cultivate the crop and get all he made. But, in order to learn problems of finance in connection with cotton production, he had to pay all the costs and keep an exact record of all expenditures.

To Billy this was not only a chance to make some money but also was a great adventure. He poured his whole soul into the job. He followed the C.A.'s instructions as to the kind of fertilizer to use, how to thin the plants, fight the boll weevil, and meet all the other problems.

His frequent visits to see how Billy was getting along, patting him on the back and complimenting his perseverence kept the boy's enthusiasm at fever heat all summer. When the last boll was finally picked in the fall and the staple marketed Billy proudly pocketed $50 profit on his summer's work and thought it more money than he would be able to spend in ten years.

But he was encouraged to hold back part of it to invest in a poultry project the following spring. He bought a hundred chicks, grew them out and had twenty-five laying hens the following fall. He began to learn things about the balancing of poultry feeds, proper housing of hens, control of poultry parasites and other difficulties of the job. He had to keep his own records and make the project pay its way as he did with his cotton and this second summer he carried his poultry and cotton projects along together.

To make a long story short, when Billy reached manhood he had not only found something he really enjoyed doing to occupy his time during his growing years, but he bought his own clothes and had by first hand experience the most complete agricultural education a boy could acquire.

This is only one sample of human conservation that county and home demonstration agents are carrying on all over the country. They started organizing these clubs and supervising juvenile projects in Louisiana in 1910. The idea became so popular with both rural parents and children that today the number of 4-H boys and girls in the country number about a million and a quarter.

The basic unit of the 4-H is the local community club of which there may be several serving the different sections of the county. Each community 4-H Club has a local adult leader to sponsor it, aided by the county agricultural and the home demonstration agents.

The county organization has annual contests to choose winners to go to the state fairs, and then possibly on to the national 4-H Congress. The state organization is directed by a state club leader employed by the state agricultural college. The national direction of the work is under Dr. C. W. Warburton, Director of Extension in the United States Department of Agriculture. Under him are working several regional advisers. There is a national 4-H committee, not employed by public

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funds, at 56 East Congress St., Chicago, which supervises national contests, drama, promotion and the national 4-H Congress.

Those four H's stand for Head, Heart, Hands and Health. Each new member pledges:

> My head to clear thinking,
> My heart to greater loyalty,
> My hands to larger service,
> My health to better living,
> For my club, my community and my country.

Everything that properly comes under the head of farming or farm home making is included in these projects. Boys are given such projects as an acre or more of cotton, corn, wheat, tobacco, or other crops; a garden plot; a heifer calf to raise; a sow and pigs; a flock of poultry; gardening, etc. Girls take up such projects as canning; sewing; poultry; gardening; flowers; home decorating; home landscaping, etc.

In one Tennessee community in the late 'twenties one boy twelve years old was started with a brood of one hundred chicks which his father loaned him the money to buy and feed until they could start earning enough money to repay the loan. After marketing the males as broilers, doing a certain amount of culling, etc., he carried twenty-five mature hens through the first year's laying period. Later he added a sheep project, then a sow and pigs from which he raised some ton litters. That is, the pigs of one litter from one sow reached a ton weight six months from birth: quite a feat. When this youngster finished high school he had enough money laid up from these projects to finance two years of college.

It quite frequently happens that the families of 4-H boys and girls are so poor they are unable to finance any kind of project until it can start earning. This is especially true of children of tenant farmers, share croppers, Negro families, etc. But they do not let these financial difficulties stand in the way of giving the youngsters their chance to show their mettle. They go to the banks and convince those guardians of circulating medium that little loans made to 4-H members are as sound as the thousands they risk on financing the biggest farm enterprises of the section. In one county in the mid-South a large number of poultry projects were put on where each boy and girl started with anywhere from twenty-five to two hundred day-old chicks, according to ability and experience. The bank advanced the small amount necessary in each case to buy the chicks. All they asked the youngsters to do was to sign a note agreeing to give the bank two grown pullets for each twenty-five chicks after they had matured. After collecting the pullets from all the projects at the end of the loan period the bank held an auction sale and realized more than enough on the sale of the ready-to-lay pullets to repay the 4-H loans.

In one Nebraska town the Rotary Club caught the spirit of the work, borrowed on its own security $475, reloaned it to 4-H boys in $68 lots for hog projects. With his $68 each boy was to buy a registered gilt, have her bred and pay back in pigs when she farrowed as a sow. The pigs collected in repayment were sufficient to pay back the loan.

In many communities the county agent works out all kinds of contests to whet the ambition of each boy and girl taking part in projects. Prizes are offered for the best heifer calf raised; the most cotton or corn per acre; the best cake or loaf of bread shown at a county-wide exhibition, etc. Each winner of a first prize is, of course, properly honored, and in order to keep non-winners from getting discouraged, every youngster who has done any worth while work at all is commended and recognized for what he has accomplished.

In one southern county where dairying was the predominating enterprise a large number of boys and girls ten to twelve years of age were loaned money to buy a fine blue-blooded registered heifer calf. They were advised by the county agent as to the kind of feeding, grooming, pasturing, etc., to give them for the best development. The calves were carried to many of the local fairs where they won handsome money prizes over showings of some of the best adult dairymen in the community. One boy won $150 in prize money on his heifer.

After a season of showing and growing a banquet was given in honor of these juvenile calf owners where the leading farmers of the community, the chamber of commerce, and dignitaries of various sorts participated. Each youngster was separately introduced by the county agent who recited in detail how this particular boy or girl had bought the calf, how it was fed and what was accomplished with it. Something complimentary was said about every one of the 4-H members. Were these youngsters proud? Ask me another.

The influence of this 4-H work has extended far beyond its effect on the boys and girls involved. Parents have watched these youthful experiments in better farming methods with a great deal of profit to themselves. Many farmers who have been slow to adopt improved farming practices for themselves have taken to them readily when they see fruitful demonstrations of what is being accomplished on their own land by their own offspring under the guiding hand of the county agent.

One boy, for instance, down in a mid-southern state, had an exact acre of ground measured off for a corn project. He became so enthusiastic over it he concentrated practically all of his waking hours on working it and seeing it grow and develop. He listened to all the advice the C.A. could give him about breaking the ground, pulverizing the soil to a loose mellow loam, selecting the seed properly, manuring, planting, growing and cultivating. The youngster harvested 110 bushels of

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corn off that acre and was named the champion corn grower of the state.

Was that father proud? Did he learn anything? I can best answer that by saying that his own corn production after that whooped. His average per acre from year to year jumped amazingly.

Sometimes, after many years of 4-H experience on the farm, the boy carries on his projects while in college and makes them pay part or all of his expenses. There was the Arkansas boy, for instance, who carried his project from his home along with him to the agricultural college where he operated it while taking his course in agriculture. This was a magnificent Jersey cow he had developed out of a pure bred heifer calf he had taken on as a 4-H project a few years before. He commenced trading milk to the college dormitories for his board and the demand increased so fast he built up a herd and paid not only his own way but the expenses of three brothers who were taking courses at the same institution. They start young and well in the 4-Hs.

Christmas Night

The cattle giving the Homeless home,
Sharing their bed of straw,
And shaming still all humankind
By their dumb awe;

The oxen that kneel each Christmas night,
Prompt at the stroke of the clock,
When *Christus natus est* there crows
Blithely the cock:

Such fancies but quicken human love's
Remorse by human art,
And thrill to further tenderness
The human heart.

The beasts uncomprehendingly
Gazed at the Maiden laid
In childbed and the Babe by whom
The world was made.

Roused from sleep, they dully stared
To see the lantern lit,
But past their mild moist eyes could sink
No ray of it.

They knew not what the angels sang,
Nor why the Shepherds came:
The Shepherds and the Kings to them
Were all the same.

Sweet fable of the beasts! In tears
We picture it, to share
Their welcome—which we might have given
Had we been there.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE VERY COMPLETE nature of the exposure of the duplicity exercised by Soviet Russia in preaching, through its world-wide chain of direct and indirect agencies, the doctrines of democracy, while practicing conspiratorial methods against democratic institutions everywhere, furnished by its brazen assault upon Finland may seem to be a great defeat for communism in the United States and France and England, but there is also a great danger that it may be able to turn that defeat into a victory for its ultimate purpose of furthering world revolution. The party membership, to be sure, has been drastically cut by the resignation or abandonment of membership by thousands of disillusioned supporters of the Soviet. When so ardent a former supporter of the world-peace policies and influence of Russia as Professor Frederick L. Schumann, of Williamstown, author of "Europe on The Eve: The Crisis of Diplomacy 1933-1939," which so bitterly assailed the Chamberlain and Daladier governments for their truckling to Hitler and so warmly upheld Russia's course up to that time, can now condemn Russia in the strong terms employed in his letter to the New York *Times* of December 10, it is clear how far-reaching has been the defection from support of Russian Communism among American intellectuals.

As revelation after revelation comes of the multiform manner in which Russia's paid agents have been directing the activities of American organizations: labor unions, peace societies, reform groups of many types, along lines dictated by Moscow, and boring into Federal and State government bodies and our army and navy forces, the disillusionment among former sympathizers with the ideals of communism grows stronger and deeper and the disgust and resentment of other elements of our population waxes more violent. If anything could have increased the growing willingness of our secular press to aid in the unmasking of communist activities in this country, certainly it would be the exposure of the methods used to attack the chief prop of the press, which is advertising. According to a subcommittee of the Dies Committee, the plot to subvert the chief pillar of the press was largely indirect. Through planting skilled propagandists for the ultimate aim of revolution on guiding committees, many otherwise admirable or at least thoroughly innocent groups that were working for reform in advertising methods or reform in shopping or manufacturing methods were used as tools.

Well, the accusation probably is quite true; it certainly is true in some cases, and it is well that such methods should be exposed. With all the faults that may be attached to the Dies Committee, its main task has been well worth doing, and that work should go on. But there remains the great danger already alluded to, which should be clearly recognized. Its nature is indicated by the striking coincidence that on the very day when the press was giving much space to the anti-advertising plot of the communists, it also published the news that the government

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was compelling many of the large motor car companies to cease from what the government agency interested in the matter considered to be false, or at least wilfully misleading, advertising methods. It seems that these companies tell the public that the cost of charge accounts, or instalment accounts, in buying cars is a straight six percent on the cost of the car to the purchaser; whereas, according to the government agency, it works out as high as twelve percent. Now the really interesting question in connection with the subject I am discussing is whether or not the public will make up its mind that the government in this and similar cases has been captured and perverted by the Reds and will take it for granted that all attempts to bring about honest claims in advertising or ethical methods in business in general are in themselves clear proofs that the Reds, and not reformers, are at work.

This danger has always been present since the really subversive modern movement first entered the field. It has reached a point where if a firm stand is not taken and maintained by reformers, all attempts at social reform will be damned, either honestly or maliciously, by reactionary forces.

I have heard speeches and read statements recently which to my mind clearly show that in the coming presidential campaign this matter will be a leading, if not the decisive issue. Social reformers who have willingly allied themselves with avowed communists will be chiefly to blame; nevertheless if the reformers are terrorized by the anti-Red campaign and tamely driven off the field, the ultimate victory is not likely to remain with the reactionary forces, but with the communists.

Christian reformers, at least, do not require the communists to instruct them in the evils that have led to the collapse now threatening our civilized institutions everywhere. Catholics in particular have had a succession of Popes as schoolmasters in this question. And it seems to me that Catholics who have led the way in the difficult work of enlightening the public mind as to the true aims and intentions of the communists have a particularly urgent duty to lead the way in the even more difficult task of instructing the modern mind how to distinguish between the evils of communism and the fact that many of the incidental criticisms made of our economic and governmental methods by communists are valid and true.

Yet we cannot ever safely cooperate with the communists, it seems to me. We must go our own road in this matter, or at least be very careful whom we choose as traveling companions. No more arduous job has ever been set before us, but at no time in history has the work of being a Christian been easy and pleasant—a truth which today's grim aspect emphasizes in fundamental fashion.

Communications

TO MY AMERICAN FRIENDS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Will the critics of Maritain's defense of the rôle of France and England in the present war pretend for a moment that these "imperialisms" have within recent years jeopardized the security or independence of a single nation? Can they deny that the whole course of Hitlerian Germany has been one of brazen conquest, prefaced by solemn disclaimers of all intent to conquer? If they are unable to defend these propositions, it is difficult to grasp the point or relevance of their objections. The matter is simply one which the lawyers classify with the tag *res ipsa loquitur*. And no harking back to the Boer War or to England's former mistreatment of Ireland can possibly make it other. Those episodes are closed issues, long have been. They have simply nothing whatever to do with the question of whether or not the free peoples of Europe shall continue indefinitely to submit to successive terrorizations as the instruments of a will to power which proclaims itself answerable to no tribunal of opinion, and unfettered by either conscience or compunction.

Equally misconceived in my judgment is the notion of Claire Bishop (December 8) that early Christian martyrs were Tolstoyans, and that only by an emulation of their attitude will war ever cease to be an instrument of national policy. This notion to me is bad history, bad logic and, I think, bad theology. The choice which confronted Christians in the first centuries was not one of resistance to violence or submission to it: the first option had no existence. The choice was between self-preservation by renouncing the Faith, and martyrdom by refusing to do so. Simply nothing indicates that the Christians of the first centuries rejected force, as such, and irrespective of its ends; and we know that Roman legionaries, men trained to arms and no whit ashamed of their calling, were among those who accepted martyrdom. Does not Tertullian include the army in his famous boast that Christians are to be found in every walk of life, and every calling? And certain it is that if the heroism of the martyr in choosing death to apostasy led to the eventual triumph of Christianity over paganism in the Roman Empire, that triumph did not involve a renunciation of force by the Empire.

It is only necessary to state the attitudes which Miss Bishop would make identical to perceive their contrast. The Roman magistrate said, renounce Christ or die. The martyr chose death, on his premises, logically. Give me whatever I take a fancy to, says, in effect, Adolf Hitler, or I will bomb your cities, destroy you. Now if the martyr was compelled by his supernatural premises to choose death to apostasy, the potential victims of Hitlerian aggression are equally bound by their natural premises, to wit, their right to their lands, to freedom, the ability to go to bed at night knowing that the world will not have been turned upside down before morning, to resist this aggression, and if possible put an end to its repeated invoking.

Unless one is prepared to accept the Marxian contention that war equals imperialism, imperialism equals war, together with its corollary of internal class conflict, *and* its alleged antidote, communism, one is logically compelled to distinguish between belligerents upon some ethical basis. Doubtless there are wars in which this choice is not easy; but certainly this cannot be said of the present conflict.

The great difficulty of the would-be sophistication which takes refuge in the "plague on both your houses" formula is that it always winds up by acquitting the guilty. Thus

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Imperial Germany, we are told, had no responsibility for the World War. It was forced upon her by French, English and Russian imperialists. But would we have heard much of this theory had Germany won? Has any historian, German or other, sought to exculpate Bismarck of the charge of bringing on the War of 1870 by means of a forged telegram? On the contrary; that time the Germans were proud to acknowledge their responsibility. And it is to be imagined that they are equally proud of the recent coups of Adolf Hitler brought off by not dissimilar methods. It is fashionable, I believe, to account such considerations "propaganda"; so be it; but they are also facts of history.

A COMMONWEAL READER.

SENTIMENT FOR WORLD FEDERATION

Baltimore, Md.

TO the Editors: I am perplexed! In your November 24 issue, you saw in effect that the only sane way to end this war so as to establish a lasting peace, is to "freely negotiate" now.

However, you have strongly spoken of the book, "The Revolution of Nihilism." In that book it is very bluntly stated that Hitler has admitted he will make any treaty he deems expedient, but will break it just as readily if breaking it will further the aims, such as they are, of the "German people."

Knowing that, how can anyone be sure that Hitler won't shake hands and make up with the allies, then stab them in the back as they turn to leave his "august" presence?

Extermination would seem to be the only out, but then one is reminded of the old tale of the birds that became so pesty that the farmers killed them all. Then they were plagued by the bugs who found themselves footloose and fancy free with their deadliest enemy gone.

I agree with you, though. The United States should try to do something. What, this very minor member of the younger generation gladly leaves to our statesmen.

Only one thing is certain, it seems. Nothing can be accomplished without God!

But as to Hitler, I am still perplexed!

WILLIAM SHRIVER, JR.

THE CHANGE BEYOND

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editors: It is good to see such touchingly naïve enthusiasm as Mr. Cram's in an era of "moral, intellectual, political and social anarchy and chaos." We are impressed by his trusting idealism. We agree with him that the process of devolution must be checked, that something must be done about the unemployed, that mechanical labor brings about mental decay. We agree that life as a self-supporting landowner in a small social community would restore man's intelligence, individual character and sense of responsibility. We agree with everything he says. But there are a few things that Mr. Cram has neglected to say. He has failed to mention how this so desirable millennium is to be reached. He has forgotten to tell us how land for everyone is to be acquired without the use of undemocratic and un-Christian force. In his eagerness to restore man's individual character, he has apparently not recognized that it is that very individuality which would cause thousands of people to revolt against the breaking-down of city life. He has passed over the problem of those troublesome individuals who don't want to work—for themselves or for anyone else. These are just a few points that we, in our modern skepticism, should like to have explained.

VIRGINIA BROYLES.

THE WAR

Notre Dame, Ind.

TO the Editors: For several months I have been watching the development of United States foreign trade policy under the pressure of war in Europe. The dichotomy between the changed form of this policy, after repeal of the Arms Embargo, and Christian principles which at least theoretically underly our government is as revolting as it is manifest. By no stretch of reason or imagination can this writer harmonize President Roosevelt's speech, broadcast over national hook-up September 21, 1939—which he opened with a reminder of the precepts of the Prince of Peace, and closed with a plea for Americans to sell cannons, tanks and war planes to belligerent nations—with the Democratic Platform pledge of 1936, adopted and espoused by himself.

The pledge, too, purported to be quite Christian in its regard for the lives and well-being not only of Americans but peoples of other nations: "We shall continue to observe a true neutrality in the disputes of others . . . *to work for peace and to take the profits out of war;* to guard against being drawn, by political commitments, international banking, *or private trading,* into any war which may develop anywhere."

Mr. Elliott Roosevelt, also speaking to the nation, his speech originating in the so-called Peace Station of the Texas Network, November 18, 1939, was quick to accuse Senator Holt of West Virginia of inconsistency—since the Arms Embargo already had been repealed—because that Senator criticized port authorities of a Western Coast city for allowing a British warship to refuel and peacefully depart. Can it be that the President's son does not remember his father's platform pledge three years ago?

It is true that the United States is not at war in the sense of having armed forces abroad in support of either side. Yet I wonder how many Americans realize that supplying cannon-fodder is only a minor thing in comparison with supplying cannons, for this is to trade souls for gold. As far as the national conscience is concerned, America is already an accomplice in war.

National as well as individual character is life motivated by principle, and the only purpose of having principles is that life may be correctly motivated. How long will Americans tolerate their administration's tacit assent to national principles yet patent dissent to the same principles in the enactment of legislation which governs national life? Only until the next election, I trust, when the national conscience will arise to vindicate itself, and the national character will be rescued from the depths of its present fall.

EDWARD WURTZEBACH.

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The Stage & Screen

Maurice Evans's Hamlet

"HAMLET" as Shakespeare wrote it, and certainly in many respects as he must have wished it played, is again on view in New York. We again owe this treat to Mr. Maurice Evans. A treat it is indeed for most of us who before Mr. Evans brought it to us last year had seen the world's greatest acting tragedy only in various stages of cuttings. These cuttings were sometimes done with a view to preventing boredom in the audience, but more often to providing the star with all the good things of the evening. Shakespeare knew his job as a dramatist. When he put in a scene he put it in for a reason, and to have it wrenched from its sequence or omitted entirely never has improved the final effect. The only real excuse for such mutilations has been, at least in the case of his finest plays, the excuse of the exigencies of the modern stage. In Shakespeare's day there was little time out for shifts of scenery with the result that the play could be given in a much shorter space of time than is the case today. And as an audience is apt to get annoyed when forced to shorten its dinner hour and restless if in fear of missing its suburban trains, such mutilations have been the rule in New York. Then Mr. Evans, by giving the play with pace and vitality and casting it with actors capable of acting it thus, has made us eternally his debtors.

New York has seen more poetic performances, and performances more deeply informed with psychological meaning, but none of greater intensity and vitality. Mr. Evans's own impersonation is one of melodramatic fervor rather than of brooding feeling, but it is marked by unusual clarity of mood and utterance. He is weakest in the soliloquies, and perhaps in the scene with his mother, strongest in his moments of physical action. This doesn't mean that he doesn't read his lines well, but only that he rarely puts into them anything electric, making us feel that here for the first time we really understood their significance. But he brings out the drama of the character as no Hamlet I have ever seen. In short he plays it so that not for a moment of its four hours does our attention flag.

His coadjutors are with one or two exceptions worthy of him. Mady Christians makes of the Queen a radiant figure. We understand why Hamlet's uncle should have committed murder for her. And yet with it all she is womanly and conscience tortured. Katherine Locke's Ophelia is admirable in the mad scene, but lacks distinction and variety in her earlier moments. Raymond Johnson's fussy Polonius is amusing and as nearly veritable as that somewhat confused character can be, while John Barclay makes of the Ghost a dominating element. Good words too should be said for Henry Edwards's King and Rhys Williams's First Player. As for Miss Margaret Webster's direction, that is as admirable as ever. The movement of the crowds is excellently controlled and visualized. How much of the total effect is due to Miss Webster's informing spirit it is impossible to say, but certainly it is not a negligible factor in making the present "Hamlet" one of the most masculine and inspiring performances of a Shakespeare work ever to have been seen in New York. (*At the Forty-fourth Street Theatre.*)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

All of the People All of the Time

"THE LION HAS WINGS" is a frank, undisguised propaganda film distinguished by beautiful photography and excellent cutting and editing. Its negligible story, enacted by Ralph Richardson, Merle Oberon and other Englishmen, is shoved aside while a commentator preaches that Britain believes in freedom and peace, has no use for war, has been defending its island for 800 years, now wants to devote its resources to building new houses, schools and factories. Nothing is said about colonies. Because Hitler is marching, Britain must fight. Britishers may be reassured by seeing their country's preparedness, its Royal Air Force's thrilling attack on German gunboats in the Kiel Canal and its alert air defense against German bombing raids. Americans, realizing that the English are again turning out top-notch propaganda, are likely to find even this film's reality slightly implausible and vague.

As you might expect, *Reno* is about divorce. What you do not expect in a little picture of this kind is such good production as Robert Sisk's and such intelligent, economical direction as John Farrow's. Lawyer Richard Dix comes to Reno in 1905, prospers through helping small miners, marries his secretary—pretty, doll-faced Gail Patrick. When Reno becomes a ghost town, Dix becomes a smart divorce lawyer. Neglecting his family to pile up money through his divorce business, Dix himself is caught in the divorce wheel and loses. John Twist's screenplay, which might have become cheap, sensational clap-trap, was made into an interesting, adult film, thanks to the leads' simple performances and Farrow's thoughtful control.

The Big Guy begins conventionally with Victor McLaglen as the man who worked for twenty-five years to become a prison warden and is ousted through ten minutes of politics. The over-enthusiasm of McLaglen and his wife, Ona Munson, really prepares for their disappointment, but not for the course the picture will take or the shift of emphasis through the superb performance of Jackie Cooper as a young mechanic who is framed and convicted on circumstantial evidence. The story becomes a case of conscience when McLaglen withholds proof of Jackie's innocence. Although the solution is not original, Arthur Lubin's direction creates suspense and excitement, and Cooper's acting pulls the film into the above-average class.

Joe and Ethel Turp Call on the President, a minor sentimental number with some good laughs and sweet tears, directed by Robert B. Sinclair from Damon Runyon's story, shows a Brooklyn community rushing to the defense of beloved Jim, the postman, who has been jailed. William Gargan and Ann Southern (very, very Brooklyn) even go to Washington to tell their story to the President (understanding Lewis Stone) who is glad to turn from Europe's woes to listen to Mr. and Mrs. USA's troubles. Through clever dialogue and flashbacks, you learn the facts about good, honest Jim.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books of the Week

Art of Teaching

A Goodly Fellowship, by Mary Ellen Chase. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

NO ONE who has read one of Mary Ellen Chase's sensitive and wise stories needs to be reminded that such writing is art of a very order. And no one who tries to write can read such a book as "Silas Crockett," say, without reflecting that for all the stress of such an undertaking, it must have been a delight to write so beuatiful a book. So with teaching such as Miss Chase describes in "A Goodly Fellowship." That is an art, too, even if that fact is not always appreciated by those who have to do with it. All of us who have tried to practice that most incalculable of arts have reason to be grateful to Miss Chase for the insight with which she has written of the demands and the privileges of teaching, better set forth in example and story, as here, than in analysis and precept. It is as a practicing artist that Miss Chase writes of this art, mainly as she has seen its possibilities revealed in the work of those whose teaching has meant most to her from her mother to the President-Emeritus of Smith College, from the busy Maine village woman whose culture and resourcefulness made her kitchen a real school of the liberal arts to the wise and witty president who never lost sight of the art of teaching in the complications of administration. Nor should the charming picture of the nun-teacher at mother Antonia's Saint Catherine's be forgotten, a picture which will delight all who have known at first-hand the extraordinary capacity of the sisters to combine the best of both worlds for the best of purposes.

Needless to say, in drawing her noble gallery of good and great teachers, with humorous glimpses of some not so great, Miss Chase has unconsciously drawn a very attractive portrait of her own teaching from the Maine country school to Smith College. And in so doing she has given an interesting account of the intellectual and imaginative development of the woman who moved so steadily into ever larger and larger fields of activity. It is a story of unusual energy, sensitiveness, intelligence and courage. The young New England woman who came to the Middle West for a better teaching chance, and then, when her health broke down, began in country solitude to learn to write, is the same woman who sets forth so gayly on the lecture trips of the successful novelist. The world through which she moves is a very alive picture of a somewhat chaotic but robust period of expansion in American education, a period on which for all its faults many will look back with not a little wistfulness for its optimism and its opportunities, not always, alas, used so well as this author used them.

HELEN C. WHITE.

BIOGRAPHY

Democracy's Norris, by Alfred Lief. New York: Stackpole Sons. $3.50.

IT IS ALMOST impossible to believe that the most preeminent of our Senators is the same man who broke the Czarist career of Joe Cannon thirty years ago. Equally incredible is it to know that the same Senator voted against war in 1917 and yet survived the brutal hate and hysterics that marks the degradation of the democratic dogma.

It is of this man that Mr. Lief has written. Senator Norris can scarcely be said to have a brilliant biographer. Despite the publisher's claim this is not the authoritative, definitive biography of Norris. Nor can readers of Bowers's "The Progressive Era" admit this to be the entire story of the Progressive movement.

For all that it is an absorbing book. Mr. Lief has no axe to grind; he has no thesis and prepares no brief. What he thinks about politics, reform and democracy are, almost always, implicit here. He is content to let the Norris record reveal itself. He records American history as it reflects his subject. He is interested in Norris the politician. And Norris is Lief's exponent of democracy. Norris is interested in power—power and the people.

From the record, as revealed here, there emerges one who is opposed to monopolies and trusts, corporations and big business. With Norris this opposition and lack of faith is not visceral. A Brandeis or a La Follette did not more carefully verify opinions. The laws proposed by him arose out of a certain knowledge of acute need. And he possesses a conscience that is proof against assault. He confounds Walpole's famous dictum that every man has his price. Lief reports that when the Senator saw the motion picture "The River," tears came to his eyes. "The sonorous words from the sound-track, the stirring music, the sequence of destruction and impoverishment, the unfolding of the work of the TVA, the rush of water down the spillways, the blaze and thunder of power—affected Norris." "This," he said "is my epitaph." This indeed is his epitaph. For it is the result of a seemingly hopeless warfare and of incredible faith on the part of Norris. And this, too, is Lief's story. Predominantly it is a story of absolute integrity plus brains.

But there are things about Norris I would like to know. And Mr. Lief does not tell them. Often Lief speaks of the sense of defeatism in Norris. What I would like to know is George Norris—not Senator Norris. What induces the defeatism I can understand. What makes George Norris still persist is nowhere told. For as the sage of Emporia has pointed out, Norris is a middle-class liberal. If there is a flame of hope for middle-class liberalism is does not burn brilliantly.

Norris is the author of Nebraska's unicameral legislature; is, almost alone, responsible for TVA. He suggested changes in the court and is the author of one amendment to our constitution. With New York's mayor he is co-author of the anti-injunction law. He approved the vision of Franklin D. Roosevelt but only reluctantly accepted his economics of scarcity. Yet Norris possesses social conscience and social integrity. When Mr. Hoover called Norris a consistent socialist he betrayed either irritation or aberration. Norris has analyzed the failures of our system and cannot be said to think merely in terms of constitutionalism. He has scant gifts of oratory or power of self-dramatization. Yet he inspires young men and wins plaudits from their elders. He believes in freedom, honesty and the merit system. But of a systematic philosophy there is here, revealed, in this book, scarcely anything.

Why have we had reformers in America, like Norris, and so little reform? Does this question—unanswered in Norris' mind—induce his recurrent sense of defeat? Is Norris another example of what Harold Stearns once called "the technique of liberal failure?" Is he a survival—survival of an age that is past, when Progressivism died and with it the promise of American life? Can we draw back from our surrender to "the corrupt and contented?" Mr. Lief does not answer my questions, for he has not even asked them.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

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Bernadette of Lourdes, by Margaret Gray Blanton. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.50.

TWO FACTS, apart from its merits as a piece of writing, make this book remarkable. The first is that Mrs. Blanton is a Protestant, and yet treats Saint Bernadette with complete sympathy. The other, perhaps even more striking, fact is that Mrs. Blanton is the wife of a distinguished psychiatrist, and yet avoids all the hocus-pocus of that profession. Indeed Dr. Blanton is himself preparing a book on the cures at Lourdes. Mrs. Blanton herself touches upon these and gives several case instances, accepting them fully upon the evidence.

The career of this unlettered peasant girl, who spoke only the half-French half-Spanish patois of her district, is extremely touching. One of a large family that went steadily down-hill, the father an incompetent, the mother a tippler, Bernadette nevertheless saw that series of apparitions of the Blessed Virgin, and through her childlike faith—she *was* only a child—was established the greatest shrine in the modern world. She was vilified then, and suffered a good deal in the convent at Nevers which she eventually entered and in which she died of tuberculosis. Even there the young nun had to endure being put on exhibition. With perfect simplicity and humor and poise she somehow managed to avoid the enormous publicity and the acrimonious quarrels connected with the cult of Lourdes Her work was accomplished in spite of herself.

Mrs. Blanton's point of view can be best shown in a quotation. "It was hard to believe that all this had happened so recently, that within the life time of the ancient woman standing there [the nun who showed the author Bernadette's body], this fragile, waxlike, beautiful figure, in its crystal case delicately touched with gold, had been a bitterly poverty-stricken and humiliated child. She had been called feeble-minded, perjured and insane; she had known the terror of the most intense and violent public admiration. She had adjusted herself efficiently to living in a convent and, finally, had found a true solace in the religious life. She lay now, sanctified by the church, having established by her early acts the most enormous pilgrimages in Christian history. In times of persecution, she had restored to the church that she loved a place of refuge and a fountain of healing." No Catholic could better that. And all Catholics are indebted to Mrs. Blanton who, relying for her documentation on Père Cros's three volumes, and upon her own investigations on the spot, has produced what is by far the best popular account of Saint Bernadette.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Does Distribution Cost Too Much?, by J. Frederic Dewhurst and Paul W. Stewart. New York: The Twentieth Century Fund. $3.50.

DOES DISTRIBUTION cost too much? To most people, this will appear to be a rhetorical question. It was undoubtedly so regarded by the Committee on Distribution of the Twentieth Century Fund, who supervised this study. Nevertheless in a book an answer must be given to even a rhetorical question. The anticipated answer to this particular query is "yes." Nor does the Committee disappoint the reader. Its answer is just as pithily positive as that. The reader will not be surprised either when he finds the response, on the same page to the question, "How much too much?" The committee's response is that it "is impossible to say."

This most recent Twentieth Century Fund study is undoubtedly the most comprehensive analysis of the costs of distribution yet undertaken. Yet it is only an introduction to a problem that has troubled businessmen, politicians, administrators, social scientists, and by no means least of all, consumers, for generations. And the Committee on Distribution would be the first to admit it.

The reader must not expect any sensational diatribes against the "middleman" whose functions are so often misunderstood. Nor will those engaged in the very important task of distribution (the findings indicate that approximately 60 percent of all expenditures by final consumers represent distribution expenses) find themselves completely whitewashed. A not inconsiderable share of such wastes in distribution as undoubtedly exist is attributed to consumers themselves. Finally it is concluded that certain so-called wastes are inherent in the particular socio-economic system under which we live and can be eliminated only if we scuttle our present economic and political forms of organization.

The recommendations of the Committee, based as they presumably are upon the factual findings that comprise the main body of the book, are especially noteworthy for their lack, for the most part, of novelty. Nor is this a criticism. It is, in fact, quite the reverse. The advocate of planning will, for example, be disappointed to find that the Committee does not regard with favor a policy of imposing "certificates of convenience and necessity" upon the more than a million and a half retailers. On the other hand such hoary, but sound, proposals as consumer education, improvement in accounting methods and a better trained distribution personnel are stressed.

By far the most interesting (to this reviewer) part of the book is the analysis of distribution costs which comprises the bulk of it. In this part of the study, Doctors Stewart and Dewhurst have done an admirable piece of work and their results will be welcomed by all interested in the problems attaching to distribution.

The purpose of the statistical analyses is a three-fold one. The first is the purely pedestrian one of showing the magnitude of distribution costs, for the country as a whole, for various commodities, and for the various links in the distribution chain. The second is the demonstration of the cost factors in distribution, the main purpose of which is to indicate the spheres within which economies may be achieved. The third is to determine the relative efficiency of various kinds of marketing agencies.

The main difficulty encountered by these investigators, and it is one that all dealers in statistics meet, is "inadequacy of the data." This study should have the effect of stimulating even greater zeal in the keeping of records on the part of businessmen.

In conclusion, the reviewer recommends that the book be read with the same care as that with which it was evidently written.

E. S. LYNCH.

"You Americans," Edited by B. P. Adams. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. $2.50.

IN THIS interesting book Mr. Adams has presented the impressions of the United States and its people of fifteen of the leading European and South American newspaper correspondents living in this country. It is a book which should be read by all who are brave enough to want to see ourselves as others see us. Several of the chapters ought to prove effective antidotes for our national conceit. Especially cogent in this is Carlos Davila's "You—and We—Americans." Mr. Davila is a Chilian who has a keen eye and a sharp tongue and who knows how to employ both. He admires this country, but he

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sees South America in the future developing faster than the United States. He believes too that our government's interest in private enterprise will continue. Mr. Davila's impressions ought to be pondered. He is a truly candid friend. The most subtle article is that by Raoul de Roussy de Sales, who heads his chapter "What Is This Aloofness?" and asserts that Americanism seems "to be more and more based on a will to resist not only entanglements and wars in Europe, but also all its influences." Comte de Sales insists that this fear of foreign influences is a recent product, our Founding Fathers being eager to absorb ideas from the other side of the Atlantic. He concludes by saying that in his opinion what really threatens this country is not communism or fascism, but too much impermeability to the influx of new ideas.

There are other interesting sections, notably Alberto Caprile's "From the Argentine Angles"; Mira Gavrilovitch's "You American Women"; Kurt Riess's "Your Hollywood," with his appalling contention that we are really ruled from Hollywood; and Bernard Person's "A Dutchman Comes to New Amsterdam," with his belief that by killing personal taste and raising the average to the throne we are paving the way for totalitarianism. Mr. Person is particularly bitter at the racketeering by labor unions which he found at the World's Fair. In short Mr. Adams is to be congratulated on bringing together so stimulating a series of opinions.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

FICTION

Mrs. Morton of Mexico, by Arthur Davison Ficke. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

A REVIEW of this novel might be done on one of several levels. It might be discussed from the point of view of the author's successful recreation of the magic of the Mexican scene with all its natural mystery and beauty. The particular setting is that of renowned Lake Chapala, and the writer has enveloped his sometimes rambling narrative in an atmosphere which colors the whole book; nature is presented in its serene, mystical and ferocious moments.

Or this episodic work could be approached as this poet-noveltist's revelation of the Mexican issue since we do get in it a picture of Mexico's political turmoils and its torturing social, religious and economic problems. Nor are we allowed to forget, and rightly so, the curse of the "white man's" voracious exploitation of a country rich in native tradition, culture, resources and human values.

Again this Mexican tale could be viewed as a study of mellow old age, for much of the book's charm derives from the character of Mrs. Morton, English-born octogenarian who has lived on Lake Chapala for twenty years. She is an unbeliever and a doer-of good works, and she is living out her span of years on a tranquil, reflective and altruistic plane.

In still another sense, this volume could be reviewed as Mr. Ficke's universal indictment of man's inhumanity to man. Mrs. Morton says her poetic playwright depicts the human drama as a history of centuries of jungle-like combats among generations of men. And the international struggle, he feels, will continue until the "upward-eddying currents meet in the higher air and rush together into one mighty whirlwind, *El Torbellino Fuerte,* which will sweep over the face of the earth and purge the continents of their ancient jungles of greed and cruelty." It is a horrible prophesy of a second Flood.

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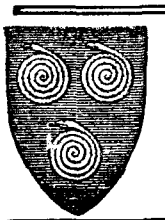

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To have referred to these four distinct elements is to say that the book will have appeal for several classes of readers, the largest of which may be those throngs of American travelers who have grown to love the real—the uncommercialized—Mexico, and who will find nostalgic pleasure in one or more larger aspects of the narrative.

As the title suggests, Mrs. Morton is the central character, and she is a romantic and realist by turns. She is anti-Catholic, but has otherwise learned to understand the Mexicans who both revere and love her. Representative of the British imperialist point of view is the story's vice-consul who doesn't share all of Mrs. Morton's views; for instance, he is not so certain as she that the "Catholic Church isn't of quite a little benefit to Mexico," and the implication is that indirectly then it will be of benefit to England's materialism. A side-glance at British colonial and imperialistic policy is incidentally gleaned from this book which has a pro-British undercurrent.

On the negative side, "Mrs. Morton of Mexico," written by one who has published many volumes of poetry the last of which was "The Secret and Other Poems," moves much too slowly in the first section of the book and is throughout rather loosely constructed. On the other hand its meditative, atmospheric and urbane qualities recommend it as unusual in the general run of fiction, for it rises to heights periodically, and presents besides a small but memorable series of life-breathing characters.

ELIZABETH MURPHY.

POETRY

Selected Poems, by Sister M. Madeleva. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.60.
Poems, New and Selected, by Melville Cane. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company. $2.00.

SISTER MADELEVA'S poems have warmth, the sort of warmth, indeed, that makes certain woman poets very popular. But her warmth is contained and does not overflow into fervencies. The warmth is there and it gives a sense of actual contact with the poet. And Sister Madeleva has another mood. She has the discipline of solitariness, and out of this come poems that I, for one reader prize more than the ones that have a sense of another's presence. Standing apart, she can look on a field of asphodel, on the light dying over the Suez Canal, the gates of sacred cities, or, as Saint Elizabeth, watch the night sky, and make poems in which there is only the watcher and the strange place.

> The aloe can have died of blossoming
> A hundred times and more
> Since dream-and-travel-dazed Odysseus
> Wandered this shore.
>
> The punctual cypress can have sought the sun
> Through seed and faultless spire
> A hundred times since one has watched beside
> A Roman fire.
>
> A thousand years ago these low Alps knew
> The dark moods of the Moor.
> Of crescent, empire, or of Itakca
> Who can be sure?
>
> There have survived these low Alps and the sky,
> Mistral and ocean swell,
> I and this delicately blossoming field
> Of asphodel.

It is her warmth that will make these poems popular. It is intergrated with her faith, and so there is a personalness that is rare and affecting in her religious poems. Her accent is deeply impressive when, knowing her own warmth of feeling, she deems there is no response and makes renouncement. Such a poem is "Light." As it has only three stanzas I shall quote it, noting how memorable the last lines are:

> You do not know, you cannot, cannot guess
> Across what burning sands I came to you;
> Over what difficult hills, upon what new
> Hard ways of loneliness.
>
> You did not think of gifts—my piteous three;
> Worthy I thought them—kings had such of old—
> Do you keep but the frankincense and gold,
> And leave the myrrh to me.
>
> Bid me, I will return into the night;
> Remember only, you who merciful are,
> I found you by the shining of a star,
> So must I walk forever in its light.

In her faith there is always the feeling that warmth must bring an answering warmth:

> No, I retract. I will not sell the ocean;
> My mountains and the blossoming stars above,
> Peace and the snow and all my wild, white freedom,
> Except you swear by God your word is love.

Another poet of faith is Melville Cane, but his faith arises out of something less directly felt. Many will feel that his poems are easy to read: their subjects are the fall of snow, rain, the coming of fog, the sun going down, seagulls, fireflies and the like; those who know about verse will remark on an achievement that has high distinction, that can suggest both nobility and stillness. But one will not read many of these poems before another thought is added. This poet is saying something momentous. He has a sense of another dimension that is recalled in the flight of seagulls or the fall of snow flakes.

> An infinitesimal point may mark
> On some wider arc.

And this dimension is within us, too, and may be brought into our consciousness in the moment of human stress. What Melville Cane does at his best is to give us the world within and without that follows the "wider arc," and to suggest that this arc, somehow, is a pledge that the rigidities of time and space can be transcended. The chipmunk, the hawk, the dog, the cat, the trout show the "body scorn" on one level, but man can discover it in himself in the moment of stress.

> On barren rocks I poured my blood
> And, where I stood
> Before my clouded eyes
> And under desolate skies
> A miracle occured.
> Something stirred!
> And over the changing planet
> Flowers dared the peril
> Of regions stark and sterile
> And grasses pierced the granite.

The moment is in El Greco's picture in the Louvre:

> Nailed,
> He has risen.
>
> Among the clouds
> Weighted with ice

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Charged with storm
Only a mortal shape suspends.

This cross,
A flag-pole planted on a mountain-peak,
This flesh
A flag.

Out of this perception comes a faith that is indefinable, but that, for this poet, makes a vista of immortality. And so, for all their apparent plainness of subject and versification, Melville Cane's poems are not such easy reading as one might suppose. I have halted in my reading and found myself in a meditation after many of these poems.

But it will not do to suggest that all of these hundred and more poems have a deep import; there are light verses here that are as delightful as they are witty. What reader will forget that rural dump-heap:

Man's inhumanity to sod
Makes countless snowdrops mourn,
And every gentle seed that's born
Gives battle for dishonored God.

And a distinction of these poems is their sense of design, the design in nature, the design that is in the verse:

So rare, so mere,
You cannot hear
It brush against the stillness or impair
With faintest stir
The poised, suspended air.

So rare, so mere,
And yet imponderably clear;
You canont see, yet see
The secret flow
Of imminent snow,
Although
The softest breath has yet to free,
The gentlest current yet to take
The first bewildered flake.

These new and selected poems reveal Melville Cane as one of the most accomplished poets in America today, and the subtlest, I should add. PADRAIC COLUM.

SCIENCE

America's Treasure, by W. Maxwell Reed. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.00.

THE STORY of the origin of America's resources of minerals and rocks is simply told in this well gotten up and beautifully illustrated volume. The author has written popular books before and is adept at presenting the bare necessities for an understanding of complex processes in a few words.

The book calls attention to the waste of resources and, in connection with coal mining in particular, to the waste of man power in the form of exploitation. The chapter on erosion is a warning which we all hope will be heeded.

America's extraordinary resources, her heritage from Western Europe, and her development at the beginning of the machine age account for her power. The last third of the book analyzes this greatness in terms of ships, scientific instruments, inventiveness, physical and mental prowess and way of life. The facts given are true enough and they should be pondered well. For the question must be raised, why have we not done better with all the gifts we have received? Part of the answer is furnished in this book, unconsciously, by the analysis of greatness in purely material terms.

WILLIAM M. AGAR.

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The Inner Forum

RADIO LISTENERS will have another fine opportunity this year to tune in on Christmas observances from various sectors of this country and more distant parts of the world. Many of these broadcasts are not specifically Catholic, although harmonious in spirit with the great tidings the Church again heralds to the world. This is particularly true of Christmas carols sung in the vernacular, most of them Catholic in origin, nearly all of them Catholic in spirit. In earlier times carols were sung in church by the congregation preliminary to beginning portions of the Christmas liturgy or at special non-liturgical services.

One of the best-known carols in the English-speaking and German-speaking worlds, "Silent Night, Holy Night," is of comparatively recent origin. It was composed in 1818 by organist Franz Gruber of the parish of Oberndorf near Salzburg at the instance of Reverend Joseph Mohr, the village priest. "Silent Night" has been featured by the National Broadcasting Company to usher in Christmas Day ever since the late Mme. Schumann-Heink sang it over the air in 1931. This year Marjorie Lawrence of the Metropolitan Opera will sing "Silent Night" over the combined NBC networks December 24 at 11:57 P.M., Eastern Standard Time.

The principal American networks have not yet announced their complete Christmas programs and readers are advised to follow announcements in the papers. Rev. Francis C. Young, Chicago's "Poet Priest" will recite original Christmas verses over the same network during the National Farm and Home Hour, December 22, at 12:30 P. M., E.S.T. Midnight Mass will be broadcast from St. Meinrad's Benedictine Abbey over the Columbia Broadcasting System, Christmas Day at 1 A.M., E.S.T.

Perhaps the principal Catholic broadcast, which will be carried over both Columbia and National systems, is that of a Vatican City choir, December 24, at 1 P.M., E.S.T. The choir of the North American College will render such selections as "Adeste Fideles," "Hodie Christus Natus Est" by Palestrina; "O Regem Coeli" by Thomas de Victoria and "Oremus pro Pontifice" by Attilio Ambrosini. And Bishop Ralph A. Hayes of the North American College in Rome will deliver a Christmas message.

CONTRIBUTORS

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